

Dear Chairpersons,

My name is Jabari Yates and I am writing about 727 Hobart Place, NW, Washington, DC 20010 (the "Property"), with a BZA Application No. 19068 for Square 2888 (the "Square"), Lot 202 (the "Lot"). I am an owner of one of the residences within 200 feet of the Property, and I am writing to express my concerns/protest over a few of the Applicant's actions.

Applicant is, amongst other things, requesting a variance relief from the lot size requirement, and the parking requirement of one space for each new lot and flat.

I am unclear as to what applicant's request would mean for parking issues within the Square. I am concerned about applicant's request, if it would result in more cars being parked within the Square because there are existing parking problems in the area, especially on Columbia Road, caused by insufficient on-street parking. To start, there are six parking spaces on Columbia Road alone that are already reserved for handicapped individuals. Moreover, while I only have one car for my residence, there are families who live at properties within the Square who have multiple cars for one residence. It sounds like ***Applicant's plans would result in severely less parking spaces for residents*** of the Square for the benefit of a single individual. Any curb cuts to construct parking spaces/driveways as part of this project would be a disaster for the residents within the Square and should not at all be considered. There are **not** any driveways for individual homes on the entire block, thus, this would disrupt the historic uniformity of our street

Additionally, the Square already includes restaurants and bars on Georgia Avenue, which attract patrons who do not live in the area. These patrons park on streets encompassing residences, such as Columbia Road, in the parking spaces that are used and needed by residents of the houses on streets such as Columbia Road. Residents being forced to park several blocks away from their home can pose severe safety concerns, especially for, but not limiting to these examples, those getting off work late at night and/or heading to work in the early hours of the morning and those who are disabled. This would cause a substantial detriment to the public good and a substantial impairment to intent, purpose and integrity of the zoning plan.

Additionally, on top of the current congestion caused by limited parking and vehicles trying to get through on roads in the Square, including Columbia Road, there is also the concern of obstructed circulation with more vehicles parked on the roads in the Square, especially Columbia Road, as the H numbered busses in connection with WMATA run down Columbia Road and are already impeded by the multiple cars on the road and drivers looking for parking spaces.

In addition to the negative affects on parking that Applicant's project poses, including safety concerns, I am also concerned about the look and design of the Square, especially Columbia Road, after Applicant's project is completed. It is clear that historically and even to this day, Applicant has not taken care of the Lot in question. The grass in the land area is poorly maintained and grows to unsightly levels aiding in the rodent population. Additionally, the Lot includes dilapidated looking structures, which are eye sores for the Square and for the owners of residences within the Square. It is common knowledge that where

there are homes and lots that appear to not be maintained and not kept up with, trespassing and criminal activity is likely to follow.

Applicant's current plans for the Lot do not necessarily put home owners within the Square in a better position for peace of mind. The houses within the Square are at uniform heights, designs and widths. This allows for a neat looking, welcoming, and homely environment that homeowners within the Square can be proud of and enjoy coming home to and be excited about inviting friends and family over to. These are common human interests that every homeowner likely thinks of before purchasing a home. The uniformity of the rowhouses give a cohesive neighborhood ambiance to the street. It is helpful in demonstrating to any would be trespassers that this is a street in which owners care about their homes and their community. As such, this presentation can help to deter criminal activity within the Square, which is beneficial to the public good. Not to mention, the uniformity of the houses within the Square adds to the property value of homes within the Square and the opportunity of later appreciation of those properties. Applicant is planning on building flats that would not be in line with the uniformity of homes that is found in the Square. It would be a shame if everyone else living within the Square had to suffer the negative consequences of the actions of one property owner-including, but not limited to loss of peace of mind in the neighborhood individuals call "home", risk of increase in trespassing and criminal activity, risk of decrease in property value-who wants to go against zoning codes for his/her own financial benefit. Zoning plans are put in place in neighborhood for a multitude of reasons, including, but not limited to, the list I have outlined directly above. **These zoning plans must be carefully considered and should not be thrown out for the simple reason of one person's monetary gain.** Applicant's plans pose a substantial impairment to intent, purpose and integrity of the zoning plan.

This is an owner who likely would not even be living in the Square. The Applicant is planning to build four flats, and it is likely that the Owner will not be living in each flat. Even if owner lives in one of the flats, it is supposed that Applicant will be renting out the other three flats that Applicant is planning to build on the Lot. This causes another safety concern, as anyone with enough funds would be eligible to rent from Applicant; however, this ability to rent does not translate into a concern for the neighborhood as a whole such that criminal activity is avoided and prevented. The properties located within the Square are single family residences, filled with people who take great pride in their home and neighborhood. There are families living in some of these residences and individuals who had an option on where to purchase a home in D.C. and decided on a property within this Square. These are people who call this area home and have done so for a number of years. These are people who are invested in the Square and the neighborhood. Applicant's plans, and the subsequent results to those plans, potentially appear to be in conflict with this line of thinking.

As a community lead/subject matter expert in this regard, I would appreciate your thoughts on the above-mentioned concerns.

I see that, in addition to myself, Public Hearing Notices were sent to other owners within 200 feet of the Property. However, some of the owners do not currently live on Columbia Road or Hobart, or within the Square at all due to the use of the home as a rental property. As such, a lack of negative response against the Applicant does not necessarily mean that there is no detriment to the public good of those actually living within the Square. The owners who do not live there may not have as strong of an inclination to protest this application because they do not live in the Square.

You should have received a Public Hearing Notice on this matter from the Government of the District of Columbia, Board of Zoning Adjustment. I understand that your response is due to the D.C. Office of Zoning prior to September 15, 2015. I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you prior to that date. The hearing on this matter will be on Tuesday, September 22, 2015, at 9:30AM at the Jerrily R. Kress Memorial Hearing Room.

I look forward to your prompt response to me on this urgent and sensitive matter.

Best,

Jabari Yates
202-316-1550